

To; All Codex Members and Observers

Antibiotics are one of humankind's greatest life-saving discoveries, but the rise of antimicrobial resistance (AMR) is now one of our global grand challenges due to antimicrobial misuse. The problem seems simple: AMR is rapidly increasing, as more microorganisms develop an ability to defeat the drugs designed to kill them. However, the solution is not simple. AMR is a complicated challenge impacting human health, animal health, and our environment – and in the connections between all three of those systems. This, of course, leads to the need of “One Health” approach when tackling the AMR.

The food chain is a major vector for transmission of resistance genes from the animal world to humans. The Task Force is developing science-based guidance on the management of foodborne AMR to ensure that Members have the necessary guidance to enable coherent management of AMR along the food chain. Given the scope of the problem and practices involved in food production, a coordinated global effort is critical to prevent and control foodborne AMR.

The 40th Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission approved the project documents submitted by the Physical Working Group on AMR chaired by the UK and co-chaired by the USA and Australia that met in London from 29 November to 2 December 2016. According to the recommendation of the Physical Working Group, the Commission agreed to establish two Electronic Working Groups: one is for redrafting the *Code of Practice to Minimize and Contain Antimicrobial Resistance* (CAC/RCP 61-2005), chaired by the USA and co-chaired by China, Chile, Kenya and United Kingdom; and the other is for newly drafting the *Guidance on Integrated Surveillance of Antimicrobial Resistance*, chaired by the Netherlands and co-chaired by Chile, China and New Zealand.

At its fifth session last year, the Task Force agreed to request scientific advice from FAO and WHO in collaboration with OIE to inform the work of the Task Force in the areas of crops, environment and biocides for both the revision of the Code of Practice and the Guidance. Based on the scientific advice provided by experts, the EWGs are working on their text which needs your brilliant inputs before the sixth session.

Following the last year's vibrant discussion, I expect progress to be made in revising and drafting the text this year. As we, all of us, are assigned to take actions against AMR, we desperately need your continued support for the text to be adopted at step 5 at the 42nd Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission in 2019. Please join the effort to stop bacteria to win the battle against antibiotics along the entire food chain.

Thank you.

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